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THE MEETING OF THE EUROPEAN CHRISTIAN-DEMOCRATIC UNION IN MALTA

In the following pages, we provide wide coverage of the meeting of the Political Bureau of the European Christian-Democratic Union (ECDU). The meeting was held in Malta on 30 and 31 March and was spent in considering the relations between the United States and Europe against the background of the international political situation. The Malta meeting was a sequel to the Political Bureau's meeting in Vienna last December, and was an attempt to bring up to date, in the light of the events of recent months, the dialogue conducted by the European Christian-Democratic parties on all the major issues of the day.

In addition to the President of the European Christian-Democratic Union, Mr RUMOR, the leader of the Maltese Nationalist Party, Mr George Borg OLIVIER, the President of the Christian-Democratic Group in the European Parliament, Mr Hans August LUCKER, and the former President of the European Parliament, Mr Mario Scelba, those present in Malta included the Vice-President of the European Commission, Mr SCARASCIA MUGNOZZA, and numerous and representative delegations which, in the course of the two days, debated in a highly constructive way the reports presented by President RUMOR and Mr SCARASCIA MUGNOZZA.

'dc-europa' will be covering the meeting in fuller detail in a special bulletin, so that the complete texts of the reports and of the principal speeches can be distributed to all those interested.

We are concerned here to stress the importance and political significance of Malta, as reflected in the final document we are publishing in the following pages. The Christian-Democrat movement, as a world-wide Catholic-inspired movement, is committed to the search for new forms of cooperation at every level, wherever freedom, peace and human rights are threatened or disturbed. The appeal of Catholics engaged in political affairs is addressed to the governments and to those in whose hands lies the future of social justice. Hence the appeal which went out from Malta for a permanent institutionalized dialogue between Europe and the United States. The full political significance of this action is demonstrated by the fact that the Christian Democrat party is the only political party to have drawn attention to the need for reflection and criticism, and for suggesting practical ways of dealing with a matter of such fundamental importance for the future as relations between the EEC and the USA. The other point which should be stressed is the substantial agreement between the views voiced within the European Christian-Democratic Union, which indicates a maturity of thought and attitude regarding the fundamental issues of our society.

Finally, the heavy work programme, including the Convention on regional policy in Munich from 28 to 30 June and the next European congress on 9 and 10 November in Bonn, show that the European Christian-Democratic parties have pledged themselves to work out new solutions to the basic questions for which answers must be found adequate to the needs of the changing times.

(Summary)

In his introductory report, the President, Mr Rumor, dwelt on the principal events on the international scene in recent months. Mr Rumor stressed that, with the end of the Vietnam conflict, the multi-polar system of world relations had once more become a meaningful reality, highlighting the fundamental issues such as the dialogue recently opened between the two major world powers; attention was focussed once more on the problem of Europe and of its relations with the United States and Eastern Europe.

This problem had in particular emerged on the occasion of the recent monetary crisis which found the European Community completely unprepared for the second devaluation of the dollar. European solidarity was not equal to the situation. The existence of a 'monetary cooperation fund', endowed with a sufficient volume of common reserves, would have enabled all the countries to accept a joint float of their currencies and thus put a community regional policy into effect to cope with the special situations of Britain and Italy.

The agreement reached in Brussels on 11 March was a stopgap solution to the situation, but one positive result at least seems to have been achieved, namely that public opinion was made aware of the importance of European unification, from the monetary and other points of view.

The monetary crisis clearly dealt a body blow to relations between America and Europe, on account of the many and complex difficulties which it caused, some of them of a psychological nature. This phenomenon must be studied carefully if it is to be remedied in good time. Friendship and cooperation between Europe and America are indispensable to both sides. A basis for fruitful mutual collaboration must be preserved at all costs.

Mr Rumor went on to point out that another aspect of the international situation of direct concern to us and closely connected with the first aspect already mentioned was that of East-West relations. Negotiations with the Soviet Union in Helsinki and Vienna had made it quite clear that the future of Europe was at stake. The difficulties in preparing the negotiations were predictable. Nobody could have failed to realize that the Soviet Union was trying to obtain from the Conference on European Security recognition of its own area of influence in Eastern Europe and to extend its influence, in varying degrees and by varying means, over the rest of Europe. The pursuit of this objective has become more important for Moscow than the necessity of reducing the American presence in Europe, which had always been given first priority in the past. It was therefore easy to see that the Soviet Union could not have witnessed the process of political and economic unification of Western Europe with satisfaction. But this did not mean that a halt should be called to the negotiating process. We must be

able to 'live with the Russians'. This means that we must be able to pass sooner or later from a predominantly military concept of European security to a predominantly political one, but in such a way as never to imperil our autonomy and perfect freedom of choice, not only on the strategic level but on all levels. For us, the fundamental point of an East-West dialogue is that it affords the possibility of proceeding along parallel lines to the construction of Western Europe. The Conference on European Security was the first international gathering at which a common foreign policy of the Member States of the enlarged Community was defined. But even this is not enough. We must see to it that the Community is accepted and recognized as a political entity by the opposite party. The optimum solution enabling us to put our relations with the East on a more solid basis will depend on the construction of a Western Europe capable of holding its own in a dialogue either with the United States of America or with the Soviet Union, even when there are serious differences of opinion.

It is essential for the United States to participate in these negotiations. It is therefore urgently necessary for the Europeans to get together with America and not only formulate clearly the aims of the negotiations but also come to a preliminary agreement on the results to be obtained. The risk to be avoided is that the important East-West negotiations on reconciliation and the relaxation of tension in Europe might be transformed into negotiations 'on Europe'.

The difficulties encountered in the negotiations at Helsinki and Vienna will have proved salutary if they encourage Europeans to reflect on these problems and help us to gain the necessary time to deepen our own unity with a view to further progress.

It is therefore difficult to imagine that the complex negotiations between the East and West will not be accompanied or possibly even anticipated by a growing achievement of European unity in effective, political terms. Any delay endangers this unity and it would be a serious error to disregard this fact.

The Christian-Democratic Movement in Europe is well aware of this but that is not enough. It must also be an effective force in the field of political responsibilities and of awakening public awareness, especially the awareness of those generations which are at present shaping the course of future history.

STATEMENT BY HANS-AUGUST LUCKER
CHAIRMAN OF THE CHRISTIAN-DEMOCRATIC GROUP OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

The analysis of relations between Europe and the USA contained in the reports by President RUMOR and the Vice-President of the Commission, Mr SCARASCIA-MUGNOZZA, could hardly have been more thorough; it would be difficult to find any further points to add following the long debate. However, I should like to offer a few remarks of my own: the most important point in today's meeting is undoubtedly the political agreement on interventions.

Had this subject been discussed two years ago we should not have had this encouraging consensus of opinion; this means that over the last two years political opinion has undergone a process of development of which we are now reaping the benefits. Next, I should like to add that the Christian-Democratic movement appears alone to be capable of coming to grips with such a delicate subject and of weighing up the position so skilfully and with such unanimity.

The decisions stemming from our discussions will shape and guide our political action for many years to come. It should now be clear to us that if our efforts to preserve the partnership with the United States come to grief, we shall fall prey to the Soviet hegemony. I believe that solidarity still exists between Europe and the USA. What is debatable and needs looking into is the system governing relations between Europeans and Americans. Three pressing issues show how the foundations of our partnership with the United States are now threatened.

First of all, the Bretton Woods monetary system which has undoubtedly collapsed; then the GATT Agreement - we are all familiar with the crisis in that organization, which is now outdated. Finally, there is NATO, which no longer provides the stimulus for integration of earlier years.

Given this situation, a new balance in relations must be sought; there is a need for a new organization whose scope must reach far beyond the principle of solidarity.

We have the scantiest time available to act along these lines; perhaps we have already missed the best moment. The problem, briefly, is to find ways and means of establishing relations between Europe and the USA on new foundations.

I do not think it possible or desirable to call a summit conference at this stage. I am much more in favour of a dialogue between institutions: the time has now come for that kind of direct cooperation. In any case, public opinion will want to know whether we are capable of putting forward sound and practical proposals.

In a few weeks a delegation of American parliamentarians will be meeting a delegation from the European Parliament in Strasbourg. Let us make sure, therefore, that our conclusions today will serve as a worthwhile contribution and basis for discussion at that meeting.

It might also be worth considering a meeting between leading figures of the two political parties in America and a Christian-Democratic delegation, which could be the start of a political dialogue at this important level.

Finally, I think it would serve a useful purpose if Mr RUMOR explained the conclusions we have reached today in a personal letter to the Prime Ministers, Foreign Ministers and Chairmen of the Christian-Democratic groups of the European countries.

In this way we shall show that we accept the challenge and are ready, within the context of a free and independent Europe in which we firmly believe, to make our contribution.

SPEECH BY MR SCELBA, FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Mr Scelba said that the roots of the crisis in relations between the USA and the Community were mainly political, particularly the Vietnam war and the failure of the European allies to show solidarity with the USA.

The setback suffered by the USA in Vietnam was a setback for the free world. With its notorious capacity for propaganda, international communism had succeeded in passing off the United States as the aggressor, even though it had intervened in Vietnam at the request of the lawful government in order to cope with the aggression of the communists in the North. In Vietnam, the United States had lost men and jeopardized its economic position. As a result of the failure of free Europe to show solidarity towards it, the United States was now pursuing a policy of self-interest in its dealings with Europe. With Vietnam, we had reached the end of a period of relations born of a war fought side by side and of all the factors that had led to the Marshall Plan and to the Atlantic Alliance. If we were to enter seriously into negotiations with the USA, we had to start out on a basis of realism and in the awareness that the solutions would be on a quid pro quo basis.

Mr Scelba went on to say that he did not believe that the United States could be attracted by a policy of imposing, jointly with the Soviet Union, a protectorate on Western Europe, or by an isolationist policy which would mean renouncing its status as a major world power.

The USA knew that its independence was being defended in Europe; but Europe would have to adjust its own policy to the fact that without the USA's military support its independence would be at the mercy of the Soviet Union.

Negotiations with the United States would therefore have to have as their starting-point a global vision of relations that were both political and economic. If the European Community pursued a commercial policy that hampered American initiative, it was not to be wondered at that the United States reacted by trading heavily on its decisive contribution to the defence of the Community.

The position of the Community was weak vis-à-vis the USA, and the fault was its own.

So long as the Community's powers were confined to economic matters and Member States acted independently in their international political relations, they would always be at the mercy of the great powers, even as regards commercial policy.

This was why it was essential to speed up the process of political integration, which meant a common foreign policy and a common defence policy, and taking on, within the framework of the Atlantic Alliance, of military burdens commensurate with the resources of all members.

FINAL MOTION

The Political Bureau of the European Christian Democratic-Union (ECDU) met in Malta on 30 and 31 March 1973 under the Chairmanship of Mr Mariano Rumor, President of the Union. On the basis of the report presented by Mr Scarascia Mugnozza, Vice-President of the Commission of the European Communities, it considered the state of relations between Western Europe and the United States.

The European Christian Democrats, deeply concerned at the range of the problems posed today by these relations,

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that in view of the rapid changes in the international situation in recent years in the monetary and economic fields and in the nature of relations between States, it is essential to bring up to date and step up cooperation between the United States and all the Democratic States of Western Europe in the interests of peace, freedom and world progress.

Security is a necessary precondition for any genuine policy for promoting peace and easing tensions.

An effective partnership coupled with a general awareness of questions of interest to both sides must lead to a more practical form of cooperation aimed at solving problems arising from

- the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe;
- the negotiations on balanced reduction of armed forces;
- the GATT negotiations and the reform of the international monetary system;
- collaboration in the sector of scientific and ecological research.

But in order to achieve all that it is capable of, cooperation must set itself wider objectives at world level, namely:

- the defence of human rights and of democracy, freedom and social justice throughout the world;
- the safeguarding of peace;
- joint practical efforts to work out and implement a global policy of aid to developing countries.

The European Christian Democrats

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democratic political movements and the governments and Community institutions to engage Europe in a permanent institutionalized dialogue - in particular between the European Communities and the United States - with a view to ensuring closer and lasting cooperation.

As regards its own action programme, the Political Bureau has confirmed that a study conference on regional policy in Europe is being arranged for 28, 29 and 30 June 1973 in Munich and that it has decided to convene the 19th Congress of the Union for 8, 9 and 10 November 1973 in Bonn.

On 16 January 1973 during the plenary sitting of the European Parliament in Strasbourg, Mr HANS FURLER, former President of the European Parliament, was presented by the President, Mr BEHRENDT, with the gold medal of the European Parliament, which is awarded to former Presidents of the European Assembly.

Mr FURLER has been a member of the European Parliament from 1958 to 1973 and was its President from 1960 to 1962. A lawyer and Doctor of Laws, Mr FURLER was Chairman of the Bundestag's Foreign Policy Committee from 1959 to 1960 and has also been Chairman of the Baden CDU's Economic Affairs Committee. He was a member of the Bundestag from 1953 to 1972.

On the same occasion Senator Alain POHER and Senator Mario SCELBA were also awarded the medal of the European Parliament. They are both members of the European Parliament and have also held important offices. Mario SCELBA has been President of the European Parliament; Alain POHER has been President of the European Parliament and of its Christian-Democratic Group.

FROM KINSHASA: IT IS NOW FOR EUROPE TO MAKE A MOVE

by Maurice Dewulf

The meeting of the Joint Committee of the Parliamentary Conference at Kinshasa from 26 to 29 March was of particular interest in that it was held at a critical time for the future of relations between Europe and the associated and associable countries. It will be recalled that, even in the Council of Ministers of the EEC there was wide disagreement on some aspects of the Association and indeed on its basic premises: opinions differed as to whether or not Associations should be founded on the basis of a free trade area.

It is too early yet to predict the outcome of these disagreements, and we cannot even determine the significance of the wider problem of relations between the EEC and the USA, which is today so vital, especially in the Mediterranean. It is important to stress that the Africans are not content simply to look on at these debates but are taking serious counsel among themselves on the question of their relations with Europe.

All the meetings held so far and those planned for the future confirm the fact that there is a great ferment of activity on the part of the African nations. The Kinshasa meeting only partly answered the question of relations with Europe. The African delegates stated their case and put their demands very clearly, but the response on the European side was not equally prompt. It could hardly have been so in view of the fact that many of the new members of the Joint Committee and of the Parliamentary Conference, only recently appointed by their national parliaments, had not yet clearly thought out their future position and confined themselves to spelling out the obligations assumed under the Treaty of Accession. In addition, the decision-making machinery of the new members - Britain and Ireland - does not allow individual members of Parliament to adopt a position of their own until the Prime Minister of their country, who is also the leader of the ruling party, has taken a decision.

This meant that, although the meetings of the Joint Committee and the Parliamentary Conference resulted as always, and especially in Africa, in excellent contacts the Conference produced only a conventional resolution postponing the discussion of fundamental issues to the meeting of the Joint Committee in Bruges during the week of 24 to 29 June.

I believe it is worth stressing another factor, namely the importance of the appointment of a group of members of the European Parliament under the chairmanship of Mr Bersani, who went to Addis Ababa to make contact with the Ethiopian Authorities and with the Inter-African Institutions, particularly the Economic Commission for Africa and the Organization for African Unity. This was an interesting experience which clearly showed that the Africans consider their political emancipation to be complete and are looking to their future economic development on two fronts: horizontally, through cooperation between African States leading to the solution of many economic problems, and vertically, through relations with Europe. Even if the inter-African organizations have affirmed their support for complete economic emancipation, there is also evident a clear desire on the part of the States concerned to pursue negotiations with the European Community, both within these inter-African organizations and in other quarters. Of particular interest in this regard, and this is my last observation, is the attitude of Ethiopia. The Ethiopian government is vigorously pursuing its efforts to reach an association agreement with Europe. This much is beyond question; the only problem that remains is to choose the type of agreement. The Ethiopians themselves believe (whether for reasons of strategy or for more fundamental reasons) that their country should, on political, economic, commercial and monetary grounds and also on grounds of development, seek a new type of link with Europe, that is to say, a link not envisaged in the Yaounde or Arusha agreements.

This enables us to envisage the possibility of Ethiopia playing a special linking role between Africa and Europe.

I believe that, at the end of this mission in Africa, all who took part saw clearly that it is now up to Europe to act: the Africans are preparing for a frank and important dialogue on an association which may be very beneficial to them, on the basis of cooperation within a partnership between politically equal partners: it is now up to Europe to gather its forces and make that gesture of solidarity and generosity which Africa has the right to expect from it.

NO LOVE FELT FOR THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSALS

The European Parliament rejects the proposed agricultural prices

by Friedrich FUGMANN

For the first time since the common agricultural market came into existence the European Parliament has not in general approved the Commission's proposals on the fixing of agricultural prices. After an all-night sitting on 5 April, it adopted a resolution on 6 April calling on the Commission to revise its proposals in the light of the debate. The agricultural ministers, who met on 9 and 10 April, were also unable to agree and now want to reach a decision on 16 and 17 April. This alone makes it appear doubtful whether the Commission will be able to comply with Parliament's request. By law, the agricultural prices for the financial year 1973/74 ought to have been fixed last August to have any effect on the decisions of producers. This was not done in view of the accession of the new Member States and since then the situation has become more difficult rather than simpler, mainly because of events in the currency field.

The Commission's intention to link agricultural policy and currency measures in an effort to come closer to a common European agricultural price system also caused the European Parliament considerable difficulties. The choice was between uniform increases in the prices guaranteed to producers in all the Member States, which would have complied with the principle of fair incomes, and increases varying from one Member State to another, which would have led to a progressive trend for Community price levels to diverge. The Commission opted for the latter course, which it considers "European", and cited in justification the highly debatable economic theory proclaimed since the days of Mansholt that in countries that have revalued, cost advantages accrue - not least for farmers - which make it possible in time to revert to a common price level by removing countervailing frontier charges or slowing down the rise in prices.

Arguments for and against also played the major role during the debate in Parliament. Of importance, too, were the demands of the European Conservatives who rejected any price increase whatsoever, and of the Gaullists who felt that in view of the lack of clarity in the currency sector it would have been more sensible not to have had a debate on agriculture at all.

The rapporteur for the Committee on Agriculture, the Dutch Christian

Democrat Mr de KONING, who along with the majority of his committee supported the Commission's proposals, stressed the disturbing effect of monetary compensation measures on competition in the common agricultural market. The agricultural market would, however, be liable to collapse if there was a recurrence of monetary difficulties; it was therefore essential that progress be made towards a common monetary policy. In Mr de KONING's view, the proposed price increases (2.78% overall, with a substantial rise in the price of beef and veal and a reduction in the price of butter) took due account of the present market situation although (in conjunction with monetary measures) they would result in there being no increase in prices at all in the Benelux countries and the Federal Republic. The spokesman for the Christian-Democratic Group, Mr Martens (Belgium), on the other hand, supported the Christian Democrats' proposal that prices should be generally increased by 4% and that, in countries where the increases were partially offset by the abolition of monetary compensation, national compensatory measures should be introduced.

Even greater concern at the Commission's proposals was expressed by the Christian Democrats Mr HEGER (Belgium), Mr FRUH (Federal Republic) and Mr STARKE (Federal Republic) who found the proposed price increase inadequate and the link with the abolition of countervailing frontier charges unacceptable. Mr FRUH pointed out that the system of countervailing frontier charges did not endanger the common agricultural market and had in fact saved it at the time of the currency crises; intra-Community trade in agricultural products had in fact reached an unprecedented level in countries that had revalued. The Irish member of the Christian Democratic Group, Mr McDONALD, also regarded the price increase suggested by the Commission inadequate.

When the time came to vote on the motion for a resolution, the motion for an amendment defended by the Dutch Christian Democrat Mr BROUWER for a 4% price increase was rejected - this disposed of the Christian Democrat attempt at a compromise, which logically meant that the Commission's proposals as a whole had been rejected.

It can be justly said that the Commission's proposals overtaxed the European Parliament. A tendency to be fought against was branding supporters of any views on the subject advanced in Parliament as anti-European, as had been attempted by the Dutch Socialist Mr VREDELING, a circumstance which almost resulted in the European Conservatives leaving from the Chamber. The scenes that followed Vredeling's lapse do the European Parliament little credit and are better forgotten.

A final point worthy of mention is that the outcome of this debate, which was conducted with great earnestness on all sides, was gratifying in that it is more fitting for the European Parliament in its role as the consultative body to bring strongly contrasting political views out into the open than to cover them up. In the long term, this should also be beneficial to European farmers: their interests are after all at stake and not the confirmation of this or that doctrine.

